

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY
Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science
Minutes of Meeting 94-3
of the
Engineering and Computer Science Faculty Council
held
Friday, March 18, 1994

Present: Professors D.J. Taddeo, (Chair), M.O. Ahmad, V.S. Alagar, R.B. Bhat, P.P. Fazio, C. Goldman, K. Ha-Huy, F.D. Hamblin, J.F. Hayes, W.M. Jaworski, K. Khorasani, T. Krepec, A. Krzyzak, V.N. Latinovic, J. Opatrny, O.A. Pekau, R. Shinghal, T. Stathopoulos, C.Y. Suen, K. Thulasiraman, R. Zmeureanu; Prof. G.H. Vatistas (Graduate Studies), Lee Harris (Library), Prof. B. MacKay (V.-R. Academic Rep.), T.L. Swift (Registrar's Office), M. Cinquino, M. Fazio, O. Zafrir (U/G Reps.), R. Vallurupalli (Grad. Rep.), J.L. Hall (Secretary).

Absent with apology: Profs. S. Cheung, M.M. El-Badry, J.C. Giguère, C. Marsh, G.D. Xistris; R. Richer, K. Rokas (U/G Reps.); M. El-Karmalawy (Grad. Rep.).

Visitors: A.S. Ramamurthy (Civil Engineering), I. Fitzpatrick-Martin (Social Aspects of Engineering) L. Zack (Public Relations), G. Turski (Dean's Office).

1. Adoption of Agenda

Motion 94-3-1 The agenda was unanimously adopted on a motion presented by Prof. G. Vatistas and seconded by Prof. J. Opatrny..

2. Adoption of Minutes

Motion 94-3-2 A motion to adopt the minutes of the ECFC meeting 94-2 held on February 18, 1994 proposed by Prof. J.F. Hayes and seconded by Prof. T. Stathopoulos was carried unanimously.

3. Chair's Remarks

3.1 Workshop on Recognition of Research Contribution and on Research Supervision

The Chair asked Dr. Suen to report on the workshop which was held on February 22. Dr. Suen stated that there was a good response to the workshop To date three of the five small workshops have submitted their summary reports (Patents, Copyrights & Recognition; Team Research/Individual Thesis and the workshop on Working Relationships). The summary reports of the Rights, Responsibilities & Rewards workshop and the Funding & Publications workshop will be

submitted shortly. These reports will be distributed to Council and to the workshop participants. Dr. Suen mentioned that a task force will be formed to continue the work started at the workshop.

3.2 Nominations for Non-Academic Awards - Convocation, June 1994

The Dean reminded Council that the Registrar has distributed forms for faculty to nominate candidates as potential recipients of the following Non-Academic Awards:

The O'Brien Medal
The First Graduating Class Award
The Malone Medal
The Concordia Medal

These forms are available from the Office of the Registrar.

3.3 Welcome

The Chair welcomed and introduced Dr. George Turski to Council. Dr. Turski has been hired as Assistant to the Dean and will assume the function of Secretary of Council as part of his regular duties.

3.4 Use of Calculators in Exams

Prof. Hamblin advised Council that the Faculty's Executive Committee has developed a policy to restrict the use of calculators in exams to a standard calculator. A letter will be sent to all students advising them that they will be required to use the standard calculator commencing next term. The calculators will be supplied for final exams in some courses this term and will be available in the relevant departments to allow the students to become familiar with their operation. The reason for this is the emergence and wide-spread use of programmable calculators which can retain significant amounts of data in their memories, an obvious method to store unauthorized material.

4. Proposed University Code of Ethics (ECFC Doc. 94-2-2)

The Chair advised Council that the Executive Committee, through Dr. Suen, has prepared a statement in response to the document. Dr. Suen stated that a letter was sent to Dr. F.B. Bird, Chair of the Task Force appointed to draft the code. The letter stated that the document has been considered and is supported in principle but that "technical aspects" need to be analyzed carefully, that this would be done in the near future and that a meeting will be arranged with him to review the details.

As this item had been tabled at the last meeting to provide time for departmental consultation, the floor was opened for discussion of the draft document. The following are some of the salient points raised:

- ✚ That the mechanism for dealing with the resolution of items such as Conflict of Interest (Pg. 2) and Complaint Mechanisms (Pg. 9) should be referred to an independent committee rather than superiors within the department or Faculty in order to assure just treatment of the issue.
- ✚ That courses or seminars should be given on ethical behavior similar to those that have been given dealing with the conscious awareness of women's issues, equity, etc. so that people can distinguish between ethical and non-ethical behavior.
- ✚ The statement on use of University Personnel, Resources or Assets (Pg. 4 item vii) needs clarification with respect to its reference to members having "financial or other interests" in private concerns. What is the definition of "financial or other interests"? Likewise the statement under "Procedures" (Pg. 5 last line) regarding "direct or indirect economic interest" of the member or "his or her family". Again the meaning is unclear. Does "economic interests" mean ownership, partnership, majority shareholder or simply owning a few shares of an enterprise. In the latter case if a member owns a few shares of the Royal Bank (Pg. 6 item 7) does that mean the Royal Bank cannot hire Concordia Students?. Further this concept seems to be in conflict with item 5 (Pg. 6) which states that an enterprise can not hire University administrative, academic or support staff during University working hours.
- ✚ In the "Procedures" portion (Pg. 12) the item dealing with published works (item d) implies that a co-author of a publication must assume responsibility for the actions of another, if this item is to applied literally.
- ✚ Under the section entitled "Responsibilities" (Pg. 12) the first item deals with the appropriateness of knowledge being transmitted to students. What or who is the determinant of the appropriateness? The requirements of this section could represent a restriction to academic freedom.
- ✚ The requirements of item 6 under the same section (Pg. 13) to provide a "welcoming atmosphere to all students" is a desirable goal but probably impossible to achieve to ensure that all students feel welcome.

With regard to more general aspects of the document, Council raised the following points:

- ✚ This document seems to be too long and detailed. Most state universities in the States have codes of ethics and are applicable to all faculty (since they are employed as civil servants), which are brief and to the point. The Code of Ethics of the State University of New York (SUNY) was given as an example.

- ✎ The Code of the Federal Treasury Board deals with two separate aspects, one being conflict of interest and the other being ethics. The document presented here seems intermix the both and as a result is unenforceable and would not stand up in court.
- ✎ There seems to be very little input from the engineering aspect. Most faculty members in this Faculty have professional status as engineers. While it is recognized that a document may be needed to avoid abuses, it should not be written in such a way that it stifles initiatives. More input is required from this Faculty.
- ✎ A Code of Ethics of the nature proposed here is unworkable, general guidelines is all that is required. Nevertheless since faculty members have extreme freedom of action some type of guidelines are required.

The Chair thanked Council for their enlightening input and reminded Council that there have been two workshops conducted recently dealing in part with ethics. (i.e. the Independent Committee of Inquiry in November and this Faculty's workshop in February) had addressed these issues very well. In addition the three Federal Councils (NSERC, SSHRC and MRC) have asked all universities to have codes of ethics in place within the next 12 to 18 months which may influence the allocation of grants.

As a result of further discussion concerning the best mechanism to review and to provide input for the revision of this document the following motion was proposed:

Motion
94-3-3

That a task-force, chaired by Dr. C.Y. Suen and consisting of one faculty representative from each academic unit, be formed to synopsise the points raised and to determine further inadequacies within the document;

That the Task Force be provided the necessary support and resources to carry out an appropriate analysis of the document with appropriate revisions that would result in a document more relevant to the Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science;

That the Task Force apprise the Ethics Code Committee of the nature of discrepancies noted by Council and that the Chairman of that Committee be invited, with other members of the Committee, to attend the next meeting of Faculty Council to review, discuss and respond to these points.

The motion was carried on a majority vote with one abstention.

5. Report from the Faculty Elections Committee (ECFC Doc. 94-2-3)

The Chair advised Council that this issue has been discussed by the Executive Committee and further discussion of the issues involved is necessary. As a result the Executive Committee would like to meet with the Faculty Elections Committee to discuss the following issues:

The question of developing a mechanism to ensure equitable representation of academic units on committees at all levels (i.e. Board of Governors, Senate and Senate committees and Faculty-wide committees);

The question of a cap on the number of terms an individual can serve on a committee;

The question the method of tallying votes to make the voting process more efficient and avoid several "run-off" votes.

As a result the following motion was proposed, voted upon and carried:

Motion 94-3-4 That further discussion of the Report from the Faculty Elections Committee (ECFC Doc. 94-2-3) be tabled to the next meeting of Council.

6. Religious Holy Days - Proposed text to be inserted into the Undergraduate Calendar ECFC Doc. 94-3-1.

A discussion, during which a variety of views were expressed about this document, resulted in the following motion being proposed, seconded and carried:

Motion 94-3-5 That Faculty Council refer this matter to the Engineering and Computer Science Undergraduate Studies Committee for consideration and that the Committee report their findings at the next meeting of Council.

8. Other Business

The Chair circulated a pamphlet concerning the "REACH " project and requested Council members encourage its promotion in appropriate schools in their home communities.

9. Adjournment

Motion 94-3-6 Adjournment was moved at 3:20 p.m.